

## ANXIOUS BRITISH CHRISTMAS

## RADICAL VICTORIES DULL THE YULETIDE MIRTH.

The Festival No Longer a Home One in Old England: In Past John Bull is Changing By-Elections; Rat Plague; Police Without Guns; House Parties.

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN. LONDON, Dec. 24.—The spirit of Christmas is not quite so buoyant as usual in old England this year. Whether it is the effect of the soft weather or the recent course of politics who can say? A sense of change, of permanent unrest, has undoubtedly fastened itself upon the minds of the masses of the English people, and this feeling does not bode merriment. The political alterations in the social and political life which began five years ago can no longer after the recent elections be regarded as a temporary phase of British public opinion, and sober second thoughts disturb the usual reflections which the holly and the mistletoe inspire.

Then too there is a change in the observance of the holiday itself which is more noticeable this year than ever before. Christmas always has been until the twentieth century dawned England's home or family holiday, peculiarly and exclusively domestic in its observance. This custom of centuries is being reversed this year. It has been impossible for weeks past to secure accommodations for the principal hotels on the south coast, while the exodus from England to the Riviera and other Continental resorts is the greatest ever known.

Truly the time has come for the world to revise its popular conception of England in no way than one. The England of tradition, the England even of Dickens, is disappearing. It is too early in this period of transition to sketch the characteristics of the new race which evolution is producing in these islands; but it will be a curious modification of the John Bull whom even the nineteenth century regarded as one of the world's dominant figures.

## BY-ELECTIONS.

A considerable number of by-elections are already foreshadowed early in the year, perhaps at the end of February. It is expected that several Liberal peers will be created, some of them being members of the House of Commons. It is rumored that no less than two or three dozen Liberal peers will figure in the New Year honors list as the first instalment. This is considered to be a tactical move, which is deemed likely to influence materially the attitude of the House of Lords toward the veto bill.

## THE RAT PLAGUE.

The Times publishes a minute report of the rat plague in East Anglia and urges the Government to make a thorough investigation. It is estimated that this would cost \$100,000. It is now certain that the plague infected rats arrived in Suffolk two or four years ago from Bombay. When the first case of the plague appeared, it was not yet been discovered, but the Times maintains that an investigation could settle this, and until the area in which there are plague infected rats is defined no steps can be taken to handle it satisfactorily.

It is admitted there is no need for a scare. Few people in England come into actual contact with rats, but it has been proved beyond a doubt that the plague in East Anglia is exactly the same as the scourge which killed 7,000,000 persons in India between 1896 and 1908.

In a vast majority of cases in India it took the bubonic form. For several years and half dozen suspected cases in East Anglia assumed the pneumonic form. This is not only more serious, but the bubonic form but is more dangerous from the fact that it is transferable directly by the patient's breath carrying the germs, so that should an outbreak occur in the thickly populated slum districts the disease could spread far and wide without the agency of plague infected rats.

The East Anglia cases fortunately have all been in extremely isolated cottages, but the extent to which rats in East Anglia are infected can be realized from the fact that more than 5 per cent. of the live rats captured in the Ipswich district taken at random, were found to be infected, while during the most virulent epidemic in Bombay, when thousands of rats were caught and examined daily, the percentage rarely reached six.

## ARM THE POLICE.

John Bull has one characteristic which is apparently unchangeable. Nobody's experience except his own carries the slightest weight with him. The whole country has been debating this week the question whether the police should be armed with revolvers. Since five brave men were shot down by alien burglars a week or so ago and a similar incident occurred in London less than two years ago one would imagine that the question carried its own answer. But the authorities throughout the country, utterly ignoring the practice of the rest of the civilized world, almost unanimously oppose such a startling innovation. It is an exaggerated complaint to say that the personnel of the English police is the finest in the world. No men anywhere show such restraint against such provocation, yet their own superiors profess unwillingness to trust them with the means of ordinary self-defense.

## HOUSE PARTIES.

Christmas house parties are more numerous than usual. King George, Queen Mary and the royal children are spending the holiday quietly at York Cottage, where no festivity will take place except the usual tree for the royal youngsters. Queen Alexandra and the Princess Victoria are at Sandringham, where the former Portuguese Minister, the Marquis de Saldanha, is their guest.

King Manuel and Queen Amelia will spend Christmas at Woodnorton, where there will be no festivities and no guests. The Prince and Princess Christian will have a house party at their residence at Windsor. The Connaughts and the Pices are the only members of the royal family not to go to England for this holiday. The Government is scattered in all directions.

Mrs. Lewis Harcourt, the American wife of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has a gay party at Nuneham, where dances and theatricals are taking place. Ambassador Field, Mrs. Field and their son, left London on Friday to spend Christmas with Mrs. John Ward, formerly Joan Reid, at Chilton Lodge, Highbury.

Lord and Lady Bateman left for Shaden Court on Thursday. They will have twenty guests for Christmas.

William Phillips, secretary of the American Embassy, and his wife are at Grange Road, Shelden Crosby is one of the guests.

Lord and Lady Greville will spend a

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Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN. TOURS, Dec. 24.—The trial of the case of the "Count" and "Countess" d'Aulby de Gatingy for swindling Mrs. Charles Hamilton Paine of Boston, now the Duchess de Choiseul-Praslin, out of \$200,000 by means of alleged old masters was called at 9 o'clock this morning. It had been reported overnight that the Duchess de Choiseul-Praslin had gone to St. Moritz, and would probably not appear in the case again, and there was therefore no surprise when it was reported that Maitre Sturel, one of her attorneys, was indisposed and would not be able to appear.

The opening of court was postponed until noon. At that hour Maitre Sturel failed to appear, and M. Pluon, the other advocate of the Duchess, was also missing. At this point Mrs. Paine's local lawyer, Maitre Dechene, stood up and stated that the Duchess had withdrawn from the case.

Maitre Bernard, the leading advocate for "Count" d'Aulby, then said that in view of this statement Mrs. Paine's letters to d'Aulby would henceforth be withdrawn from the case.

The public prosecutor announced that he would continue the proceedings against the d'Aulbys.

Nothing dramatic marked the collapse of the prosecution. It did not surprise those who knew that the Duchess left Tours yesterday. Her action only benefits her to the extent of preventing any more of her love letters being read from the large bundle which was lying in front of the president of the court.

The withdrawal of the Duchess does not finish the case, which remains based on the results of the preliminary Magistrate's investigations. The public prosecutors are always averse to nullifying the Magistrate's work, especially when it has been long and the case has involved the lengthy detention in prison of the accused. The prosecutor's words, spoken unofficially, define his attitude. He said:

"All this is very sensational, but it has no connection with the case."

Solicitor Behrend, who was the agent of d'Aulby for the sale of Mrs. Paine's letters, was the first witness of the day. He insisted on the Prosecutor-General reading in full the letter from a firm of Boston lawyers declining to have anything to do with d'Aulby's negotiations with the Paines in regard to the disposal of the letters. The reading of this letter gave a distinctly different impression from that which had been produced by the extracts which had previously been cited. The letter showed that the American lawyers wished to distinguish between the contract for the sale of the pictures and the question of the sale of Mrs. Paine's letters. They did not want to have anything to do with the latter part of the case.

The Prosecutor declined to confront Behrend and Dutheil on their different accounts of their interview, saying it would be useless, as Dutheil is an imbecile. Behrend described how he was shadowed for weeks by detectives, and how an attempt was made to commit burglary at his London office, where there were many more of Mrs. Paine's letters.

M. Maratray testified that he knew d'Aulby well. Once he asked him to act as trustee for a relative, his position giving him control of large sums of money. d'Aulby declined. d'Aulby bought Mrs. Paine a piano, also profiting from the 30 per cent. reduction in price d'Aulby was entitled to as a professional musician.

Maratray was in a position to know that d'Aulby wrote music which was published under Mrs. Paine's name.

Maitre Bernard made an effort to show there was a conspiracy against d'Aulby, establishing that at the time of his arrest

Behrend and Dutheil were in the room.

A detective testified that he found in possession of the prisoner fifty-six rough emeralds and some diamond ornaments.

The Colombian Minister demanded the extradition of the prisoner, who was remanded.

CHRISTMAS IN SPAIN.

Many Gifts for the Needy in Madrid—The King Goes Hunting.

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN. MADRID, Dec. 24.—The streets of the capital to-night present a most animated appearance. There was a distribution of gifts at the various asylums and almshouses, and to the poor generally.

King Alfonso will pass the Christmas holidays hunting.

The Weather.

Dec. 25.—The storm was central yesterday near the St. Lawrence Valley, and was attended by snow in the lake region and over Canada generally and rain in New England and the middle Atlantic States. This storm also caused a decided increase in temperature in New England and generally higher temperature along the middle Atlantic coast. It is closely followed by an area of high pressure, maintaining generally cold weather westward to the plateau region and its influence was felt as far east as the lake region and the Ohio and Tennessee valleys. The line of freezing was carried as far south as Montgomery, Ala., and extended almost on a straight line to Howell, N. M. The temperature at Moore head was 16 degrees below zero at 10 P. M. on Monday, and at St. Paul 6 below.

Another storm was coming down from the extreme Northwest with moderate temperature conditions in the States west of the Mississippi and it was causing cloudy and unsettled weather in Montana, the Dakotas, Colorado and Utah, with snow falling at Williston, N. D.

In this city yesterday it was cloudy and rainy with light westerly winds, averaging humidity, 90 per cent. barometer, corrected to sea level, at 4 A. M., 29.92; 3 P. M., 29.80.

The temperature yesterday, as recorded by the official thermometer, is shown in the annexed table:

1890. 1899. 5 P. M. 1910. 1900. 9 A. M. 10° 12° 35° 9 P. M. 35° 32° 35° 12 M. 42° 38° 12 M. 35° 35° 35° 3 P. M. 42° 38° 12 M. 35° 35° 35°

Lowest temperature, 24° at 10 P. M.

WASHINGTON FORECAST FOR TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

For eastern New York, cloudy and colder to day, with local snow in the interior; unsettled and warmer to-morrow, with snow in afternoon or night; moderate northwesterly winds.

For New England, local snows and colder to-day, much colder in northern portion; unsettled and warmer in eastern portion to-morrow and moderate northwesterly winds.

For eastern Pennsylvania, fair in southern and local snows in northern portion to-day and colder; unsettled and warmer to-morrow; snow or rain in afternoon or night; moderate north and northerly winds.

For the District of Columbia, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, fair and colder to-day; unsettled and warmer to-morrow, with rain or snow by night; light to moderate north to east winds.

For western New York, local snows to-day and colder in eastern portion; unsettled to-morrow with snow in western portion; moderate variable winds becoming southeasterly to-morrow.

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## CHRISTMAS R. R. TRAGEDIES

## NINE PASSENGERS BURNED ON BRITISH EXPRESS.

Terrible Scene in Lonely Hill Country in Yorkshire—Four Children Mown Down at a Grade Crossing—Fatal Accidents Also in France and Italy.

Special Cable Despatches to THE SUN. LONDON, Dec. 24.—Christmastide has an unenviable record in Europe for railway disasters. That of 1910 will be memorable for not less than five, two in France, one in Italy and two in Great Britain, the latest of which was at Bolton, Derbyshire, where a party of children returning from a cinematograph show were scattered at a level crossing. Four of them were killed and one injured.

It is feared that the loss of life by the wrecking of the Scotch express will exceed the official estimate. The train was running from London to Carlisle when it collided at 6 o'clock this morning with two light locomotives between Hawes and Kirby-Stephen, 200 miles from here. The front portion of the express was wrecked and the coaches caught fire.

The train was travelling at the speed of sixty miles an hour when it dashed into the engines throwing them a distance of 150 yards. Red-hot coals set fire to the first carriage and in a short space of time the entire train was burning furiously. All but two of the coaches were reduced to cinders.

Nine bodies, all charred beyond recognition, have been extricated from the wreck, and it is thought that others may be under the debris. Twenty-five other passengers were more or less seriously injured.

The work of identifying the incinerated fragments of clothing are all that remain. The horror of the scene was heightened by the fact that the accident occurred in so remote a spot that it was difficult of access and consequently there were no appliances with which to extricate the wounded, who, pinned beneath the wreckage, were slowly burned to death. The scene of the wreck is in the Pennine Hills, the highest railroad section in England.

It is officially stated that the nine bodies recovered were burned after death, although survivors told a pathetic tale of a young married couple who saw their baby girl burned alive, while they were pinned in the wreckage and were unable to help her.

ROME, Dec. 24.—A collision occurred to-day near the Milan station between an express train crowded with passengers and a freight train. An engine, three cars and the baggage van were completely smashed. Many persons were injured, five of them, including an engineer, seriously. A heavy fog prevailed at the time and this rendered the work of rescue more difficult than it otherwise would have been.

MONTEUX, Dec. 24.—In the wreck of the Paris-Ventimiglia express near this place last night two persons were killed and nine were injured. There were a number of Americans on the train, but none was seriously hurt.

The corridor carriages, of which the train was composed, were badly broken up. For a time the local railway officials lost their heads and did little to protect the passengers from suffering in the cold. Many got accommodations at last in local hotels and after a time went on to the Riviera in other trains.

Mad Dog Bites Eleven.

MADRID, Dec. 24.—A mad dog bit Dr. Cervera, a very eminent physician here, and ten members of his household. All the victims have been inoculated with the anti-hydrophobia virus.

Japanese Cadets in Mexico.

MEXICO CITY, Dec. 24.—Eighteen officers, twenty-six musicians and 140 cadets from the Japanese warships visiting Mexico arrived here this morning. All were assigned to quarters at the military school.

AMERICAN SINGER CLEARED.

French Court Finally Dismisses Broker's Charge Against Young Woman.

PARIS, Dec. 24.—The investigating Magistrate has decided that a sufficient case for trial has not been established against Elizabeth Haworth, the American vaudeville singer who was arrested last July on complaint of a Marcellus stock broker of the name of Moss that she had robbed him.

The charge against Miss Haworth was disproved, but she was kept in prison until August 1, when she was admitted to bail. In view of all the circumstances of the case great surprise was expressed that the authorities did not release the accused, whose stage name is Rose Lemoine, as soon as it was proved she had committed no crime.

First Tea at the Embassy.

Dr. and Mrs. Hill Opening New Home in Berlin—New Year Reception.

BERLIN, Dec. 24.—The American Embassy building is still too incomplete to be habitable, but the chancery on the ground floor is now in order. The removal of the embassy to Unter den Linden has eliminated a class of callers whose inquiries should more properly be addressed to a tourists' office or a servants' registry than to an embassy.

There will be no Christmas entertainments of a public kind, but the embassy will be thrown open to the American colony for a New Year reception. Dr. and Mrs. Hill have invited a few friends to take tea in the new house on Tuesday.

Joseph Swain of Swarthmore College, Prof. and Mrs. Patterson Congers and Miss Sherman of Washington are among the number.

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## CANALEJAS AT A CRISIS.

## Seventeen of His Bills Fought by the Opposition—The Vatican Panders.

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A council of the Ministers will be held on Monday to devise means for facing the existing political crisis. It is alleged that this crisis is very acute, the opposition refusing to sanction seventeen of the Government bills.

The notorious Socialist Deputy and agitator, Lerroux, who is engaged very actively in an attempt to save his political life, will preside at a meeting to be held at Valencia on January 1, when he will inaugurate his propaganda.

An electoral meeting held at the Teatro Eliseo at Gijon was attended by 4,000 persons. Deputy Melquiades made a speech in which he reviewed his precarious youth, exciting much enthusiasm.

ROME, Dec. 24.—Despite the passage of the "padlock" law by the Spanish Cortes, which is considered by the Vatican as a flagrant violation of the Concordat, a mutual agreement and a revision of the Concordat is not unlikely. The Pope is willing to resume negotiations provided he receives assurances that the application of the law will not be hostile to the Church. He will wait for Spain to take the initiative. Meanwhile the Vatican's attitude will be passive.

NO "YSOBEL" FOR ROME.

Lieblers Willing, but Mascagni is Sore Over the 1911 Exposition Arrangements.

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN. ROME, Dec. 24.—Mascagni has not yet fixed the date of his departure for New York, but it is likely that he will sail on board La Provence from Havre. It was hoped that while he was in Rome the executive committee of the 1911 exposition would arrange for a performance of "Ysobel" in that year.

The Liebler company is willing to send a company to Rome, but Mascagni resents the fact that he is not a member of the committee and refuses to have "Ysobel" given in Italy for some time, certainly not